

Dateline DHMH

Maryland Department of Health and Mental Hygiene

A Message from the Secretary

Performance Excellence is really taking off!

DHMH employees submitted a record 147 nominations for this annual recognition initiative, more than double the number received last year. Counting teams, this means that more than 200 staffers could receive an award.

The nominations were submitted in every job and team category and came from throughout the Department. Nominations were made in each category as follows:

- 15 for Administrators;
- 18 for Office & Clerical Workers;
- 13 for Paraprofessionals;
- 16 for Professionals-Supervisors;
- 36 for Professionals-Workers;
- one for Public Safety or Security Workers;
- three for Service/Maintenance Workers;
- four for Skilled Craft Workers;
- four for Technicians;
- five for IT Improvement Teams; and
- 32 for Process Improvement Teams.

The nominations will be evaluated and rated by the Performance Excellence Council's Evaluation Committee. After the Committee finishes rating the nominations in April,

written notice will be sent to the nominees and their sponsors informing them of the outcome. Framed certificates will be presented to those winning an award.

Performance Excellence Awards are given to reward and recognize employees who go above and beyond their standard duties to produce noticeable results. It is efforts such as these that help an organization achieve performance excellence by excelling in the areas of leadership, strategic planning, customer focus, information and analysis, human resources, process management, and, most importantly, results.

I would like to credit the Performance Excellence Council and the Reward and Recognition Committee for revamping the awards from last year. The changes allow nominations from all employees and not just supervisors, and classify nominations by job categories.

If you have any questions about the Performance Excellence Awards, please contact Lee Williamson, Performance Excellence Coordinator, at 410-767-5190 or by e-mail at lwilliamson@dhmh.state.md.us.



Take the Health Freedom Walk -- A Path to Wellness

Join fellow walkers and honor those who traveled the Underground Railroad in their quest for freedom by signing up now for the Health Freedom Walk, scheduled for Saturday, May 11 in Baltimore.

Health Freedom Walk is a great opportunity for adults of all ages to enjoy a walk with family, friends and neighbors.

And, you will improve your health while learning more about the history of the Underground Railroad, which wasn't a real railroad, but a network of waterways, homes, and hidden passageways that allowed slaves safe cover to travel through dangerous territory to make it to free land.

The Walk is funded by the Division of Cardiovascular Health and Nutrition through the Community Health Awareness and Monitoring Program (C.H.A.M.P.), an affiliate of the University of Maryland Department of Family Medicine. Sponsors include The Baltimore Alliance for the Prevention and Control of Hypertension and Diabetes, American Cancer Society, American Heart Association, Amerigroup, NAACP, Pharmacia, and the Arthritis Foundation.

Continued

The Health Freedom Walk

Continued

To help prepare you for the walk, C.H.A.M.P is offering six weeks of pre-walk training led by fitness trainers (conductors) at various sites (depots) around the city. Incentives, weekly prize drawings, and healthy snacks will keep you going. Everyone completing the walk will receive a freedom medallion, which is a replica of a tag given to slaves who gained freedom.

For information about Health Walk to Freedom, or to register for the walk and training sessions, contact C.H.A.M.P at 410-669-6340. Information is also available on the Web at www.healthylifeshow.org.

Hotline Provides Instant Information to Maryland Citizens

Add the telephone to your list of ways to get reliable health information — at least if you live in Maryland. DHMH recently established the Maryland Public Health Hot Topics Line, a 24-hour, seven-day-a-week hotline to answer the health concerns of citizens and health professionals.

The hotline was created in May of last year as a source of information on West Nile virus. But when anthrax and bioterrorism hit the headlines last fall, the Department was swamped with calls from people worried about exposure to the potentially deadly disease. Expanding the hotline to address these health concerns became a priority, one that will remain in

effect as Maryland plans ways to use federal grant monies earmarked for emergency preparedness.

"We see it as a way to deliver timely, consistent health information," said Joey Scaletta, epidemiologist with the Community Health Administration's Epidemiology and Disease Control Program, who coordinates the development of hotline content.

Currently, callers can select from pre-recorded, two-minute messages on bioterrorism, influenza and West Nile virus. Once connected to the recording, callers can choose more specific messages designed for the general public, health care providers or businesses.

The recorded messages on bioterrorism provide detailed information on anthrax and smallpox. Callers can learn about symptoms, vaccines, testing and surveillance.

Operators staffing the hotline are trained to assist callers who request more information and direct them to appropriate resources. Operators are available from 8:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. Monday through Friday and 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. on Saturdays and Sundays. The pre-recorded messages are available at any time.

As warm weather approaches, new seasonal health topics will be added to the system to replace outdated ones. For example, a message on Lyme disease is expected to replace the one on influenza.

To access the Maryland Public Health Hot Topics Line, call 1-866-866-2769.

Black History Month Celebration

This year's theme was Kids Count Too, and plenty of children were present at the DHMH celebration on February 27.



Above: Calista DeJesus, Junior Mistress of Ceremonies.

Right: The Harlem Park Community School Ensemble.



Public Health Week Celebration is April 2

With a focus on *United for Public Health Emergency Response*, DHMH will kickoff its celebration of **Public Health Week** on Tuesday, April 2. The ceremony, beginning at 10:00 a.m. in the O'Connor Building lobby, will bring recognition to the many public health system employees who demonstrated outstanding conduct in response to the terrorist attacks of 2001.

Public Health Week, held from April 1 - 7, is designed to inform public health employees and citizens on how to respond in an emergency. Information will be available about adjustments that have been made to Maryland's public health system in response to the attacks.

Speaking at the kickoff will be Secretary Dr. Georges C. Benjamin, Deputy Secretary Arlene Stephenson, Deputy Secretary Jonathan Seeman, Laboratories Administration Director Dr. J. Mehsen Joseph and others. A reception will follow in the O'Connor Building Conference Room L-3.

Congratulations to the following DHMH units which will receive recognition at the Public Health Week kickoff:

- The 24 Local Health Departments
- Laboratories Administration
- Community Health Administration, Epidemiology and Disease Control Program



- Mental Hygiene Administration
- Family Health Administration
- AIDS Administration
- Personnel Services Administration, Payroll Services Unit
- Office of the Attorney General
- DHMH Mail Room

- Office of Public Relations and Graphics
- Information Resources Management Administration
- DHMH Emergency Management Team
- Office of the Secretary



Maryland Public Health Week Calendar of Events

Tuesday, April 2:

Maryland Public Health Week Kickoff and Recognition Ceremony — O'Connor Building Lobby, 201 W. Preston St., Baltimore, 10:00 a.m. Recognition ceremony for public health workers who demonstrated outstanding conduct above and beyond the call of duty in response to the terrorist actions of 2001. Reception to follow in O'Connor Building Conference Room L-3, 201 W. Preston St., Baltimore.

Emergency Management Lunch and Learn — Presentation by MEMA Public Information Officer Quentin Banks on *"Life after 9/11: Overview of Maryland's Emergency Management Agency."* 12 noon, O'Connor Building Conference Room L-3, 201 W. Preston St., Baltimore. Bring your lunch; drinks and dessert provided. To register contact JB Hanson at 410-767-6493.

Public Health Students' Poster Display in the lobby of the O'Connor Building, 201 W. Preston Street. Sponsored by the Maryland Public Health Association. For more information, visit www.mdpha.org.

Wednesday, April 3:

Public Health Conference — The Metropolitan Washington Public Health Association will hold their annual conference, entitled *"Healthy People 2010, Enhancing Capacity for Local Action"* from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. at the Pan American Health Organization, 525 23rd Street NW in Washington D.C. For more information visit www.mwpha.org.

Thursday & Friday, April 4-5:

Health Disparities Conference — As part of celebrating 2002 National Minority Health Month, the Johns Hopkins Urban Health Institute will hold a conference on "Reducing Disparities in Health Outcomes: The Role of Population-Based Medicine in Clinical and Public Health Practice." For more information visit <http://urbanhealthinstitute.jhu.edu/#>.

Saturday, April 6:

Public Health Walk/Run for World Health Day — The Johns Hopkins University Bloomberg School of Public Health (J.B. Grant International Health Student Society) is planning a Run/Walk at the Gwynns Falls/Leakin Park in West Baltimore. For more information, contact Lorraine Yeung at 410-955-3903 or by e-mail at loyeung@jhsph.edu

Upcoming events

Monday - Friday, April 1 - 7 — **National Public Health Week.**

DHMH kickoff on Tuesday, April 2 in the O'Connor Building lobby beginning at 10:00 a.m.

Tuesday, April 2 — **Workshop: Effective Mid-Level Management in the Human Services;** University of Maryland School of Nursing Baltimore, 8:30 a.m. — 4:15 p.m. \$115, approved for Category I continuing education credits. Phone 410-706-1839 for more information or visit the school's Web site at www.ssw.umaryland.edu for a full workshop description.

Thursday, April 4 — **Workshop: Treating the Drug Addicted Client: Putting Science Into Your Clinical Practice;** University of Maryland School of Nursing Baltimore, 8:30 a.m. — 4:15 p.m. \$115, approved for Category I continuing education credits. Phone 410-706-1839 for more information or visit the school's Web site at www.ssw.umaryland.edu for a full workshop description.

Saturday, April 6 — **Eighth Annual Update on Alzheimer's Disease and Other Dementias;** Renaissance Harborplace Hotel in Baltimore, 8:00 a.m. — 5:00 p.m. Sponsored by Johns Hopkins Medicine Department of Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences, Copper Ridge and the Alzheimer's Association Central Maryland Chapter. For further information, please call 410-955-2959. On-line registration and other information is available at www.med.jhu.edu/cme.

Thursday, April 11 — **Workshop: Census 2000 and State-Level Data for Community Planning: What is Out There and How Can It Be Used?;** University of Maryland School of Nursing Baltimore, 8:30 a.m. — 1:00 p.m. \$70, approved for Category I continuing education credits. Phone 410-706-1839 for more information or visit the school's Web site at www.ssw.umaryland.edu for a full workshop description.

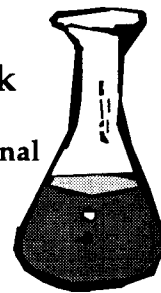
Monday, April 15 - Friday, April 19 — **National Laboratory Week.** Kickoff on Monday, April 15 in the Laboratories Administration lobby beginning at 10:00 a.m.

Tuesday, April 16 — Seminar in Recognition of **National Minority Health Month, DHMH.** Phone 410-767-6234 for more information.

Wednesday, April 24 — **DHMH Multicultural Health Careers Academy,** held in recognition of National Minority Health Month, William H. Lemmel Middle School in Baltimore. Phone 410-767-6593 for more information.

Thursday, April 25 — **Workshop: Human Capital Initiatives to Strengthen and Sustain Social Service Programs;** University of Maryland School of Nursing Baltimore, 8:30 a.m. — 12:15 p.m. \$60, approved for Category I continuing education credits. Phone 410-706-1839 for more information or visit the school's Web site at www.ssw.umaryland.edu for a full workshop description.

National Laboratory Week



The kickoff for **National Laboratory Week** will be held in the O'Connor Building's J. Mehser Joseph Laboratory Tower on Monday, April 15 beginning at 10:00 a.m.

The week-long celebration, which runs from April 15 - 19, has a theme of *Quality Service through Quality Testing.*

Posters which depict the Administration's role in protecting the health of Maryland's citizens will be located in the O'Connor Building lobby from April 15 - 19 and in the 301 Building from April 22 - 26.



STATE OF MARYLAND

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